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REMARKS

ON THE

ADDRESS

TO THE

GOVERNORS

OF

ADDENBROOKE's HOSPITAL.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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Dec. 21, 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

ONE of our own body has lately printed and diſtributed an addreſs to us, on the ſubject of the election of a fourth ſurgeon to our Hoſpital. Having been myſelf a witneſs to the proceedings at the board on the 15th of Nov. I beg leave to offer to your conſideration

ſideration a few remarks relative to them, and to the addreſs.

And let me aſk in the firſt place, to what purpoſe are your votes ſolicited by the ſurgeons on this occaſion? To what end do they requeſt your ſupport at the next general court? They have indeed made us a generous offer to take upon themſelves the office of attending on the patients without further aſſiſtance, but have they given us the choice of accepting or refuſing it?

At the reſpectable and numerous meeting on the 15th, I myſelf was a witneſs of the indignation they expreſſed at the propoſal of referring the matter to your determination at a general court. I myſelf was a witneſs of the menace which they publicly made, that they would not ſubmit to your deciſion, but would throw up their places and leave the Hoſpital to itſelf, in caſe your determination ſhould not be agreeable to their will.

And is this for the advantage of the Hoſpital? Is it indeed the benefit of this benevolent inſtitution for which they are contending? In a caſe in which indivi-

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duals may have motives very different from the good of the Hoſpital, is it reaſonable that the whole government of it ſhould be ſubmitted to thoſe very individuals themſelves? The governors of the Hoſpital are too independent, I truſt, to be intimidated by ſuch a menace.

But it has been inſinuated that, however independent of the ſurgeons the governors may be, the Hoſpital will be ruined by their reſignation. The inſinuation, I will anſwer for it, is groundleſs. Do the ſurgeons imagine, that the Hoſpital can ever want the aſſiſtance of gentlemen of their profeſſion? They well know in how ſhort a time it would be completely ſupplied in caſe of their deſertion. There have been inſtances of the reſignation of ſurgeons at other Hoſpitals, particularly at Leeds and Shrewſbury, but the inconveniences which proceeded from this were but momentary; and I challenge the ſurgeons to produce one inſtance, amongſt the many Hoſpitals in this kingdom, where any material ill conſequence, in reſpect of profeſſional aſſiſtance, has ever followed from the deſertions of the faculty.

But I aſk pardon of the reſpectable writer of the addreſs, (for ſuch I am ſure he is from the candor and liberality of his pamphlet,) if I have been too warm in ſpeaking what I thought to be for the good of the Hoſpital. I am ſure I feel as much intereſted as himſelf in its welfare; and ſhould be very much concerned if this diſpute, however it be decided, ſhould prove in any reſpect injurious to ſo excellent an inſtitution. I hope, and I doubt not, the governors will meet with temper, and will conſider the relief of the poor and the diſeaſed, as a matter of infinitely greater importance than the intereſts of the contending parties. The conſciouſneſs of diſpenſing health and happineſs to multitudes, inſpires a ſatisfaction too noble to be ſacrificed to any meaner conſideration.

The caſe, I am perſuaded, was miſrepreſented to the writer of the addreſs, when he was informed that "a "report was ſpread that the weekly meeting were act-"ing arbitrarily, and determining a matter which they "had no right to do by the rules of the Hoſpital." I cannot find that the affair was ever ſo ſtated, nor can I conceive from what the report aroſe, unleſs that it might perhaps have been mentioned, that the board on the

the 8th of Nov. conſiſted only of five governors beſides the gentlemen of the faculty.

With reſpect to the aſſertions in the addreſs, that "*three ſurgeons are ſufficient for the requiſite attendance on* "*all the patients of the Hoſpital,*" and that "*there is no* "*occaſion for any other ſurgeon with reſpect to profeſſional* "*ſkill and ability,*" I believe they were neither of them ever queſtioned. For my own part, I declare that I have a high opinion, both of the abilities and the attention of the preſent ſurgeons: but I do not ſee how an argument can be deduced from this, againſt the admiſſion of the gentleman who now offers his ſervices to the Hoſpital. The queſtion is not what is ſufficient, but what is advantageous to the Hoſpital.

It is ſaid that by increaſing the number of ſurgeons, "the moſt experienced would be leſs employed than be- "fore:" an obſervation of ſome weight, if the perſon propoſed were inexperienced and uninſtructed in his profeſſion. But that is not the caſe: I am well informed that he was regularly educated under the care of a ſurgeon, and afterwards attended the Lectures and the Hoſpital for three years at Edinburgh, and for two years

years in London. He has been ſettled in Cambridge ſince June 1781, and has practiced here, to the knowledge of many reſpectable governors, who have conceived a high opinion of his profeſſional abilities. It is our duty as governors to provide, not for the preſent moment only, but for futurity. The time will come, when it will be abſolutely neceſſary to appoint other ſurgeons: it is therefore our wiſdom to allow the junior ſurgeons every advantage of improving themſelves, and thus by a timely foreſight, to provide for a ſucceſſion of able and experienced men.

It is well known that from July, 1776, until the death of Mr. Hopkins, there were four ſurgeons on the books, not to mention the conſulting ſurgeon Mr. Hayles. Yet the author of the addreſs contends that "in effect there were but three, Mr. Hopkins being ſo "infirm as to be incapable of attending buſineſs *almoſt* "*from the time* of Mr. Bond's and Mr. Oke's election." An expreſſion from which it is reaſonable to conclude, that *at* that time, Mr. Hopkins was capable of attending buſineſs. In this caſe therefore it appears that the governors ſaw no impropriety in the appointment of four ſurgeons.

On the 2d of Oct. 1780, Mr. Griffies was elected a fourth ſurgeon at the inſtance of a gentleman who is now the moſt earneſt againſt the admiſſion of a fourth. This caſe is ſtill more in point, becauſe the governors at that time determined that the number ſhould not exceed four, which implies that they did not think four an improper number. For if they had wiſhed to limit the number to three, would it not rather have been determined that for the future they ſhould not exceed three?

Notwithstanding the objections that have been made, I cannot but think, the increaſing number of patients, is an argument for not diminiſhing the number of ſurgeons. More than 167 in-patients were not admitted in any of the firſt three years. In 1783 (when the laſt account was publiſhed) the number was 406. But I ſhould think myſelf uncandid if I did not here obſerve that the ſummer of 1783 was an unhealthy time, and that there were more patients then in the Hoſpital, than uſual: but however the average number for five years before, excluſive of 1783, was 331.

With reſpect to the ſtatements in the addreſs, rela-

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tive to other county Hoſpitals, I cannot but obſerve that it would have been more ſuitable to the uſual candor of the author to have compared the proportion of in-patients and ſurgeons in them and ours, for an equal number of years. The number of years in the other Hoſpitals, one with another, is about four: he ought therefore to have ſtated our average number for the laſt *four years*, which, according to the printed accounts, is 361, and not the average of *eighteen*, which is only 272.

HOWEVER, I allow that in moſt of them the proportion of patients to the number of ſurgeons is larger than in our own, though in ſome of them it is very much the reverſe. But unleſs we knew their rules, and the circumſtances of the towns in which they are eſtabliſhed, we cannot deduce any argument from them. If all the reſpectable ſurgeons in theſe towns who have offered their ſervices, have been admitted into them, the argument would be very much in our favour.

HAD our Hoſpital been founded at a time referred to by the writer of the addreſs, when there were only two ſurgeons in Cambridge, *it* might have been brought

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as an inſtance of one which was ſcantily provided with profeſſional aſſiſtance. But the ſhortneſs of the time will not allow me to inquire, as I ought to do, into theſe circumſtances. The circumſtances, however, of *another Hoſpital*, which, in a former publication, were brought as an inſtance againſt the admiſſion of a fourth ſurgeon here, I have inquired into. It was ſaid, that there were but three ſurgeons in St. Thomas's Hoſpital; and I find that it is true; but I find likewiſe that they have a great number of aſſiſtants, under the name of Dreſſers, ſo that their buſineſs is to perform only the principal operations, and to direct. Their places likewiſe are very lucrative; they have ſalaries, and derive a large income from their pupils.

Thus far I have conſidered the public and general reaſons which have been advanced againſt increaſing the number of ſurgeons: I now come to the more private ones. With reſpect to the diminution of ſurgery fees, which has taken place on account of the eſtabliſhment of the Hoſpital, I obſerve that the candidate partakes with the ſurgeons who already belong to the Hoſpital, in every diſadvantage ariſing from that inſtitution; and

he only deſires to participate with them in the advantages.

The opinion, that "the buſineſs of this place will afford but a ſcanty proviſion for three ſurgeons," gives me no concern. We may ſafely leave this matter to itſelf: if the evil exiſts, it will regulate itſelf in this, as well as in every other kind of buſineſs.

It is natural to aſk, why are the gentlemen who have been ſo long eſtabliſhed here, and whoſe reputation is deſervedly ſo high, afraid of the admiſſion of a young ſurgeon into the Hoſpital? Why ſhould they ſo anxiouſly ſtrive to exclude him? Surely the advantages of experience and of long connection, the *conjunctio ſortis*, which is mentioned, are ſufficient to render it unneceſſary for them to give themſelves any trouble on ſuch an occaſion as this. If the abilities of the gentleman who now offers his ſervices to the Hoſpital, be inferior to theirs, they need not fear the compariſon. If, on the other hand, they are ſuperior, — this muſt be acknowledged to be a powerful reaſon for his admiſſion. I appeal to the writer of the addreſs: his ſentiments, I am

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ſure, are too liberal to ſuffer him to ſet the fee of a ſurgeon in competition with the happineſs of his fellow-creatures.

One conſiderable object in the eſtabliſhment of public hoſpitals, is the advancement of the knowledge and practice of ſurgery. Their utility in that reſpect is univerſally allowed and univerſally felt. It is granted by the writer of the addreſs himſelf. And I cannot comprehend why theſe advantages of the inſtitution ſhould not be extended to the gentleman who is now a candidate for them. It is intimated, indeed, that he is a "*Stranger already in practice*, who was invited to come and ſettle here with a view to be appointed a ſurgeon to our Hoſpital." If this were the caſe, I ſee no very obvious reaſon why he ſhould be excluded. But is it the caſe? He has been ſettled here for three years and an half, and has continued during the greateſt part of that time without the ſmalleſt proſpect of being appointed to attend the Hoſpital. It is true, indeed, that at his firſt coming, he applied to a gentleman of the faculty on the ſubject; but he received from him as an anſwer, that an order had been made, that the number of ſurgeons ſhould not exceed four. He made there-

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fore no further application, of any kind whatever, till the vacancy occaſioned by the death of Mr. Griffies, which happened on Saturday, Nov. 6. The firſt ſtep he then took was to wait upon the gentlemen of the faculty; but he thought it indelicate, as well as unneceſſary, (not ſuſpecting ſuch an oppoſition) to wait upon Mr. Thackeray the very day his nephew died. He poſtponed it therefore till Monday morning, the 8th, on which the firſt weekly board was held. Previous to that meeting he found only one of the four gentlemen of the faculty, who attended it, at home. And he was greatly ſurpriſed in the afternoon, when he was informed by another of them, of the offer which had been made by the ſurgeons, of continuing their attendance on the patients without the aſſiſtance of any other ſurgeon.

As I am now conſidering the ſubject in a more private light, it perhaps may not be improper to mention, that I have been informed that this application has been miſrepreſented as an oppoſition to the appointment of the ſon of one of the ſurgeons, whom he intends, in a few years, to ſettle in Cambridge. Indeed I myſelf heard that gentleman declare publickly at the meeting

meeting on the 15th of Nov. that he *expected* the governors would appoint his ſon, who is now nineteen, when he was of a proper age. I confeſs myſelf at a loſs to underſtand this declaration, unleſs it was his intention to reſign in favour of his ſon. For I cannot ſuppoſe him to be ſo inconſiſtent with himſelf, as to think three ſurgeons ſufficient till he had a nephew to offer, and after his death again to think three ſufficient till the time ſhall come when he can put in his ſon for a fourth. But however that may be, I do not underſtand how the addition of a fourth ſurgeon now, ſhould be any obſtacle to the future appointment of the young gentleman, as in caſe his father ſhould reſign in his favour, he may be admitted on either ſuppoſition, and if he does not, he will be excluded on either; — as well by the determination that there ſhall be only three ſurgeons, if the preſent candidate is unſucceſsful, as by the order that there ſhall be only four, if he ſucceeds.

With regard to the diſagreements alledged in the letter which was preſented to the board on Monday Nov. 15th, to have ariſen amongſt the gentlemen of the faculty; if men are of a proper temper, and properly

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diſpoſed to execute a truſt committed to them, the number four has not any neceſſary tendency to produce diſcords, and if they are not ſo diſpoſed, diſcord will ariſe amongſt three or even between two.

But it is inſinuated that the admiſſion of a fourth Surgeon is contrary to the original inſtitution. This I do not comprehend, for the original inſtitution does not fix any preciſe number: that is left entirely to the diſcretion of the governors; and they have provided a ſpecial order that the number ſhall not exceed four, by which they have expreſsly given their approbation to that number.

A GOVERNOR.

BRITISH MUSEUM 14 JY 74

POSTSCRIPT.

Since the preceding letter went to the preſs, I have been informed that a report has been of late induſtriouſly circulated by Mr. Thackeray, for the purpoſe of ſhewing that improper methods had been employed to introduce the candidate into Mr. Thackeray's buſineſs. Upon mentioning it to Mr. Fariſh of Magdalen college, he told me that he himſelf had heard of ſuch a report, and in conſequence had called at Mr. Thackeray's houſe to enquire into the truth of it, and that Mr. Thackeray told him, that about two years ago Mrs. Winder waited upon him to apologize for not employing him, as he had reaſon to expect, at her next lying in, Mr. Fariſh of Magdalen having told her huſband, when he applied for the vacant office of cook of that college, that his vote ſhould be in Mr. Winder's favor, upon condition that his wife would for the future employ his brother as ſurgeon.

Mr. Fariſh ſolemnly declared that he had never uſed any ſuch expreſſion, or any words to that effect. It was agreed that Mr. and Mrs. Winder ſhould be confronted with Mr. Thackeray. They were confronted

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with him ſeparately. She poſitively affirmed that the ſtory was falſe, and that ſhe had told Mr. Thackeray that her only motive for employing a new ſurgeon was, a ſenſe of her obligations to Mr. Fariſh of Magdalen. However ſhe acknowledged that at the time when ſhe waited upon Mr. Thackeray ſhe was fluttered.

Mr. Winder being then called in, declared, that Mr. Fariſh's anſwer to his application was, "I have no objection."

Mr. Fariſh, in order to explain what Mrs. Winder had juſt ſaid about her obligations to him, obſerved, that at a time when the ſmall pox was very contagious in the neighbourhood, he adviſed Mrs. Winder to have her child inoculated, and as an objection was made on account of the expence, he deſired his brother to give his attendance gratis.

The whole of this account is extracted from the minute, which was made at the time by the conſent of the parties, and which is in the poſſeſſion of Mr. Fariſh of Magdalen, and Mr. Thackeray.

I content myſelf with this plain ſtatement of the caſe, and leave it to the governors to judge how far Mr. Thackeray's conduct on this occaſion is juſtifiable.

Copy

Copy of Mr. Winder's Depoſition.

William Winder maketh oath, and ſaith, that upon his application to the Rev. Mr. Fariſh for the cook's place at Magdalen college, Mr. Fariſh did not, directly or indirectly, deſire him to employ his brother as ſurgeon.

He further ſaith, that he never mentioned any thing to his wife to that effect.

William Winder.

Sworn and ſubſcribed before me this
twenty third Day of December,
in the Year of our Lord, 1784.
JOHN FORLOW, Mayor.

N.B. The general court will be held on Monday, the 27th Inſtant.